



Montana Crop & Livestock Reporter

Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture

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HIGHLIGHTS

Sheep and Lamb Losses
All Wheat County Estimates
Ag Prices Received
Honey Production
Chicken Inventory and Annual Egg Production

2006 Montana Sheep and Lamb Loss

Montana sheep and lamb producers lost 51,000 animals to weather, predators, disease and other causes during 2006, representing a total value of \$4.1 million, according to a survey conducted by USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Montana Field Office. The total number of sheep and lambs lost increased 5,000 head from last year, but the total value of inventory lost was 5 percent less than a year ago. The January 1, 2006 inventory was 3 percent less than the previous year. Sheep and lamb deaths amounted to 8.7 percent of the January 1 inventory

and lambs born, up one percentage point from last year.

The number of sheep and lambs lost to all predators totaled 14,100 head, up 1,700 head from last year. Lamb losses by all predators amounted to 11,500 head, up 14 percent from last year. The number of sheep lost to all predators totaled 2,600, up 300 head from a year ago. Predators caused an estimated \$1.0 million in losses in 2006, down 5 percent from the previous year. Losses due to predators amounted to 2.4 percent of the January 1 inventory and lambs born and 28 percent of all sheep and lamb deaths. Coyotes remained the largest predator for both sheep and lambs. Coyotes accounted for 72 percent of the predator caused losses and 20 percent of all death losses in the state. The value of losses attributed to coyotes was \$0.7 million.

The total value of non-predatory losses was \$2.5 million in 2006, compared with \$2.8 million in 2005. Non-predatory losses accounted for 58 percent of all losses. The largest non-predatory cause of losses was weather conditions at 9,200 head. Sheep lost to non-predatory factors totaled 9,200 head, 8 percent higher than 2005. Non-predatory lamb losses came in at 20,400 head, 500 head higher than a year ago.

Producers reported more sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes this past year. This resulted in a 40 percent increase in the number of sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes from last year. Lambs lost to unknown causes totaled 5,100 head, compared with 4,000 head last year. Unknown causes claimed 2,200 sheep, compared with 1,200 head last year. The value of sheep and lambs lost to unknown causes increased to \$0.6 million.

Sheep & Lambs: Death Losses by Cause, Montana 2005-2006

Cause of Loss	SHEEP LOSS				LAMB LOSS				TOTAL LOSS			
	Number of Head		Value in Dollars (000) 1/, 3/		Number of Head		Value in Dollars (000) 2/, 3/		Number of Head		Value in Dollars (000) 3/	
	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006
Predators												
Bear	200	300	30.0	39.3	200	200	14.9	12.2	400	500	44.9	51.5
Bobcat	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Coyote	1,500	1,800	225.0	235.8	7,000	8,300	520.8	508.0	8,500	10,100	745.8	743.8
Dog	200	100	30.0	13.1	300	500	22.3	30.6	500	600	52.3	43.7
Eagle	--	--	--	--	900	1,100	67.0	67.3	900	1,100	67.0	67.3
Fox	100	--	15.0	--	1,000	700	74.4	42.8	1,100	700	89.4	42.8
Mountain Lion	--	200	--	26.2	200	300	14.9	18.4	200	500	14.9	44.6
Wolf	200	100	30.0	13.1	100	100	7.4	6.1	300	200	37.4	19.2
Other Animals	--	--	--	--	100	--	7.4	--	100	--	7.4	--
Unknown Predators	100	100	15.0	13.1	300	300	22.3	18.4	400	400	37.3	31.5
Total Predators	2,300	2,600	345.0	340.6	10,100	11,500	751.4	703.8	12,400	14,100	1,096.4	1,044.4
Non-Predators												
Total Diseases	1,800	1,600	270.0	209.6	5,600	5,000	416.6	306.0	7,400	6,600	686.6	515.6
Lambing Complications	1,200	800	180.0	104.8	4,600	5,600	342.2	342.7	5,800	6,400	522.2	447.5
Old Age	3,300	3,000	495.0	393.0	--	--	--	--	3,300	3,000	495.0	393.0
On Back	600	500	90.0	65.5	100	100	7.4	6.1	700	600	97.4	71.6
Poison	700	700	105.0	91.7	800	900	59.5	55.1	1,500	1,600	164.5	146.8
Theft	200	100	30.0	13.1	200	400	14.9	24.5	400	500	44.9	37.6
Weather Conditions	300	2,300	45.0	301.3	6,800	6,900	505.9	422.3	7,100	9,200	550.9	723.6
Other	400	200	60.0	26.2	1,800	1,500	133.9	91.8	2,200	1,700	193.9	118.0
Total Non-Predators	8,500	9,200	1,275.0	1,205.2	19,900	20,400	1,480.6	1,248.5	28,400	29,600	2,755.6	2,453.7
Unknown Causes	1,200	2,200	180.0	288.2	4,000	5,100	297.6	312.1	5,200	7,300	477.6	600.3
Total Loss	12,000	14,000	1,800.0	1,834.0	34,000	37,000	2,529.6	2,264.4	46,000	51,000	4,329.6	4,098.4

1/ Using average reported value for Ewes 1+. 2/ Lamb values equal to market year average price received for lambs multiplied by an average weight of 60 pounds per lamb. 3/ Totals may not add due to rounding. -- Denotes less than 100 head.

All Wheat Acreage, Yield, and Production by Counties and Districts, 2006

County and District	ALL						IRRIGATED			
	Planted	Net Planted 1/	Harvested	Yield	Production		Planted	Harvested	Yield	Production
	Acres	Acres	Acres	Bushels	Bushels	Rank	Acres	Acres	Bushels	Bushels
Deer Lodge	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Flathead	21,300	21,300	19,300	53.1	1,024,000	27	9,000	9,000	64.2	578,000
Granite	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Lake	13,000	13,000	12,900	61.3	791,000	34	8,900	8,900	66.0	587,000
Lincoln	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Mineral	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Missoula	1,000	1,000	1,000	41.0	41,000	48	--	--	--	--
Powell	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ravalli	1,800	1,800	1,700	28.2	48,000	47	600	600	53.3	32,000
Sanders	700	700	700	37.1	26,000	51	--	--	--	--
Other	1,200	1,200	1,100	64.5	71,000	--	1,500	1,500	62.0	93,000
NORTHWEST	39,000	39,000	36,700	54.5	2,001,000	--	20,000	20,000	64.5	1,290,000
Blaine	189,500	189,500	187,600	22.6	4,234,000	14	6,700	6,300	42.1	265,000
Chouteau	509,800	509,800	505,800	48.1	24,313,000	1	--	--	--	--
Glacier	143,000	143,000	142,300	29.9	4,250,000	13	3,100	2,400	37.1	89,000
Hill	438,800	438,700	434,700	26.7	11,601,000	2	--	--	--	--
Liberty	246,400	246,300	245,400	30.8	7,568,000	5	--	--	--	--
Phillips	130,900	130,900	124,700	17.7	2,203,000	23	4,200	4,000	50.0	200,000
Pondera	177,800	177,800	176,800	47.5	8,393,000	3	12,300	12,100	58.3	706,000
Teton	155,600	155,600	154,600	47.2	7,301,000	6	11,900	11,600	54.3	630,000
Toole	237,200	237,100	237,100	34.8	8,259,000	4	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	6,400	5,000	45.8	229,000
NORTH CENTRAL	2,229,000	2,228,700	2,209,000	35.4	78,122,000	--	44,600	41,400	51.2	2,119,000
Daniels	254,500	254,000	252,000	14.3	3,604,000	17	--	--	--	--
Dawson	170,100	170,100	167,500	19.5	3,259,000	18	2,100	2,100	65.2	137,000
Garfield	98,500	98,300	96,700	25.9	2,503,000	22	--	--	--	--
McCone	235,700	235,700	234,000	19.8	4,625,000	10	--	--	--	--
Richland	160,300	160,300	158,300	23.9	3,788,000	15	8,300	8,300	71.4	593,000
Roosevelt	327,500	327,500	325,500	16.3	5,298,000	9	5,800	5,800	62.9	365,000
Sheridan	298,900	298,900	294,900	15.2	4,491,000	11	1,900	1,900	59.5	113,000
Valley	292,500	292,300	290,100	14.7	4,263,000	12	8,000	7,500	47.2	354,000
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	3,200	3,200	51.6	165,000
NORTHEAST	1,838,000	1,837,100	1,819,000	17.5	31,831,000	--	29,300	28,800	60.0	1,727,000
Broadwater	38,900	38,900	38,900	45.6	1,775,000	24	11,600	11,600	75.4	875,000
Cascade	142,100	142,100	139,100	47.9	6,667,000	8	3,200	3,100	62.6	194,000
Fergus	186,000	186,000	184,000	38.1	7,009,000	7	--	--	--	--
Golden Valley	26,200	26,200	25,700	36.5	937,000	28	--	--	--	--
Judith Basin	86,500	86,400	86,400	35.7	3,087,000	19	1,000	1,000	67.0	67,000
Lewis & Clark	16,600	16,600	16,600	45.3	752,000	36	5,400	5,400	77.2	417,000
Meagher	10,900	10,900	9,800	22.8	223,000	44	800	800	51.3	41,000
Musselshell	40,800	36,000	28,800	18.3	528,000	40	700	500	38.0	19,000
Petroleum	22,400	22,300	21,300	38.7	825,000	32	--	--	--	--
Wheatland	42,900	42,900	42,700	26.0	1,110,000	26	500	500	36.0	18,000
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	3,600	3,300	65.2	215,000
CENTRAL	613,300	608,300	593,300	38.6	22,913,000	--	26,800	26,200	70.5	1,846,000
Beaverhead	7,600	7,600	6,800	78.5	534,000	39	6,900	6,500	81.2	528,000
Gallatin	55,700	55,700	55,600	54.5	3,029,000	20	19,500	19,500	73.5	1,434,000
Jefferson	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Madison	13,000	13,000	12,600	66.3	835,000	31	9,400	9,200	76.3	702,000
Silver Bow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Other	700	700	700	45.7	32,000	--	200	200	75.0	15,000
SOUTHWEST	77,000	77,000	75,700	58.5	4,430,000	--	36,000	35,400	75.7	2,679,000
Big Horn	117,500	117,500	114,100	33.1	3,779,000	16	14,000	13,300	60.6	806,000
Carbon	7,100	7,100	6,900	22.6	156,000	45	1,300	1,200	65.0	78,000
Park	9,300	8,700	8,700	37.4	325,000	43	2,100	2,100	53.3	112,000
Stillwater	37,800	37,800	37,200	25.1	935,000	29	--	--	--	--
Sweetgrass	2,600	2,500	2,500	36.8	92,000	46	--	--	--	--
Treasure	8,700	8,700	8,600	58.6	504,000	41	4,300	4,200	84.3	354,000
Yellowstone	90,000	90,000	89,000	28.5	2,538,000	21	4,300	4,300	80.7	347,000
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	1,000	1,000	58.0	58,000
SOUTH CENTRAL	273,000	272,300	267,000	31.2	8,329,000	--	27,000	26,100	67.2	1,755,000
Carter	38,200	38,200	31,800	23.7	755,000	35	--	--	--	--
Custer	25,600	25,600	23,800	29.2	696,000	38	1,000	1,000	46.0	46,000
Fallon	40,600	40,500	39,500	20.3	801,000	33	--	--	--	--
Powder River	15,500	15,500	14,400	29.7	428,000	42	--	--	--	--
Prairie	31,300	31,300	28,500	25.4	725,000	37	2,200	2,200	63.2	139,000
Rosebud	41,400	41,400	39,200	30.4	1,191,000	25	2,500	2,300	80.0	184,000
Wibaux	38,100	38,100	37,100	23.0	853,000	30	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
SOUTHEAST	230,700	230,600	214,300	25.4	5,449,000	--	5,700	5,500	67.1	369,000
MONTANA	5,300,000	5,293,000	5,215,000	29.4	153,075,000	--	189,400	183,400	64.3	11,785,000

1/ Planted acres less winter wheat replanted to spring wheat. -- Counties are combined into "other" counties to avoid disclosure of individual information.

Montana January 2007 full-month crop prices were mostly higher when compared with December 2006. Montana's winter wheat price increased \$0.04 from December to \$4.52 per bushel; spring wheat was up \$0.05 to \$4.61 per bushel; but durum wheat dropped \$0.14 to \$4.73 per bushel; feed barley rose \$0.11 to \$2.94 per bushel; malt barley increased \$0.09 to \$3.19 per bushel; and oats rose \$0.91 to \$2.84 per bushel, setting a new record high which was \$2.50 per bushel in April 2002.

Livestock prices in Montana for the full month of January were mostly lower than the previous month. Beef cattle

dropped \$2.80 to \$85.50 per cwt, steers and heifers decreased \$8.20 to \$93.80 per cwt; and cows rose \$5.00 per cwt to \$44.80. The price for calves was down \$5.00 to \$113.00 per cwt, sheep increased \$4.50 to \$35.50 per cwt, but lambs dropped \$8.40 to \$97.60 per cwt. All milk rose \$0.50 from last month to \$14.40 per cwt. Mid-February steers and heifers were \$94.30 per cwt, cows were \$46.30 per cwt, calves were \$113.00 per cwt, and all milk was \$15.10 per cwt.

The U.S. mid-February winter wheat price was \$4.62 per bushel, spring wheat

was \$4.67 per bushel, durum wheat was \$4.97 per bushel, all wheat was \$4.66 per bushel, malt barley was \$3.09 per bushel, feed barley was \$3.13 per bushel, all barley was \$3.10 per bushel, and oats were \$2.12 per bushel. Steer and heifer prices were \$90.70 per cwt, cows were \$46.50 per cwt, calves were \$115.00 per cwt, all hogs were \$46.60 per cwt, and all eggs were \$0.781 per dozen.

The preliminary All Farm Products Index of Prices Received by Farmers in February, at 127 percent, based on 1990-92=100, increased 3 points (2.4 percent) from January. The Crop Index is up 6 points (4.6 percent) and the Livestock Index increased 3 points (2.6 percent). Producers received higher commodity prices for corn, broilers, soybeans, and hogs. Lower prices were received for broccoli, lettuce, eggs, and oranges. The overall index is also affected by the seasonal change based on a 3-year average mix of commodities producers sell. Increased average marketings of dairy, cattle, broilers, and strawberries offset decreased marketings of corn, soybeans, wheat, and cotton.

INDEX (1990-92=100)	Jan 2006	Feb 2006	Jan 2007	Feb 2007
Prices Received	113	113	124	127
Prices Paid, Interest, Taxes, & Farm Wage Rates 1/	148	147	152	153
Ratio 2/	76	77	82	83

1/ Prices paid indexes (1990-92=100) published monthly. 2/ Ratio of index of prices received by farmers to index of prices paid.

Commodity	U N I T	Monthly Average				Change From Previous		Mid-Month Average	
		Montana			U.S.	Month	Year	Montana	U.S.
		Jan 2006	Dec 2006	Jan 2007	Jan 2007	Dec 2006	Jan 2006	Feb 15, 2007	Feb 15, 2007
		Dollars							
Winter Wheat	Bu	3.40	4.48	4.52	4.53	+0.04	+1.12	4.63	4.62
Durum Wheat	Bu	3.34	4.87	4.73	4.70	-0.14	+1.39	5.12	4.97
Spring Wheat	Bu	3.76	4.56	4.61	4.52	+0.05	+0.85	4.81	4.67
All Wheat	Bu	3.53	4.54	4.58	4.54	+0.04	+1.05	4.76	4.66
Barley, All	Bu	2.65	3.04	3.15	3.03	+0.11	+0.50	3.32	3.10
Feed Barley	Bu	1.72	2.83	2.94	3.12	+0.11	+1.22	3.15	3.13
Malt Barley	Bu	3.00	3.10	3.19	2.99	+0.09	+0.19	3.35	3.09
Oats	Bu	na	1.93	2.84	1.97	+0.91	na	na	2.12
Alfalfa Hay	Ton	63.00	76.00	79.00	112.00	+3.00	+16.00	80.00	117.00
All Other Hay	Ton	62.00	80.00	74.00	99.30	-6.00	+12.00	75.00	105.00
All Hay Baled	Ton	63.00	77.00	79.00	108.00	+2.00	+16.00	79.00	114.00
Steers & Heifers	Cwt	119.00	102.20	93.80	89.80	-8.40	-25.20	94.30	90.70
Cows	Cwt	50.90	39.80	44.80	44.40	+5.00	-6.10	46.30	46.50
Beef Cattle 1/ Calves	Cwt	101.00	88.30	85.50	84.30	-2.80	-15.50	84.20	85.80
Sheep	Cwt	148.00	118.00	113.00	115.00	-5.00	-35.00	113.00	115.00
Lambs	Cwt	43.20	31.00	35.50	37.10	+4.50	-7.70	na	na
All Milk	Cwt	105.00	106.00	97.60	96.50	-8.40	-7.40	na	na
	Cwt	14.60	13.90	14.40	14.50	+0.50	-0.20	15.10	14.70

1/ Composite of steers, heifers, and cows. na-not available.

2006 Honey Production

Montana honey producers with five or more colonies during 2006 produced 10.4 million pounds of honey, up 20 percent from 2005. The estimate of honey production includes production by colonies that were in the state for part of the year. There were 132,000 colonies producing honey in 2006, compared with 130,000 colonies in 2005. The honey yield per colony was 79 pounds, up 12 pounds from a year ago. Honey stocks on December 15, 2006 were estimated at 2.0 million pounds, down from 3.1 million pounds in 2005.

Prices for Montana honey rose \$0.17 to \$1.00 per pound in 2006. The 2006 value of honey production was \$10.4 million dollars, up 44 percent from last year due to higher prices and increased production.

U.S. honey production in 2006 from producers with five or more colonies totaled 155 million pounds, down 11 percent from 2005. There were 2.39 million colonies producing honey in 2006, down 1 percent from 2005. Yield per colony averaged 64.7 pounds, down 11 percent from the 72.4 pounds in 2005. Colonies which produced honey in more than one State were counted in each State where the honey was produced, therefore yields per colony may be understated. Colonies were not included

if honey was not harvested. Producer honey stocks were 60.5 million pounds on December 15, 2006, down 3 percent from a year earlier. Stocks held by producers exclude stocks held under the commodity loan program.

Honey prices for 2006 in the U.S. increased to 104.2 cents, up 14 percent from 91.8 cents in 2005. Prices are based on retail sales by producers and sales to private processors and cooperatives. State level honey prices reflect the portions of honey sold through retail, co-op, and private channels. Honey prices for each color class are derived by weighting quantities sold for each marketing channel. Honey prices for 2006 were up from the previous year for all color class totals.

Chicken Inventory and Egg Production 2006

There were 490,000 chickens on Montana farms and ranches on December 1, 2006, up 3 percent from a year ago. The December 1, 2006 inventory included 355,000 layers 20 weeks old and older, 134,000 pullets, and 1,000 other chickens. The total value of all chickens on December 1, 2006 was \$1.6 million, up 25 percent from last year. The average value per bird, at \$3.30, was up \$0.60 per bird from 2005.

Montana chickens produced 104 million eggs during the year ending November 30, 2006, down 2 percent from 2005. The state had an average of 341,000 layers in 2006, down 9,000 from a year ago. The average production per layer on hand was 305 eggs, up from 303 in 2005.

In the U.S. layer numbers during 2006 averaged 346 million, up 1 percent from the year earlier. The annual average production per layer on hand in 2006 was 263 eggs, up slightly from the 2005 average of 262.

U.S. egg production during the year ending November 30, 2006 totaled a record high 90.9 billion eggs, up 1 percent from 2005. Table egg production, at 78.0 billion eggs, was up 1 percent from the previous year. Hatching egg production, at 12.9 billion eggs, was down 2 percent from 2005.

The total number of chickens on hand in the United States on December 1, 2006 (excluding commercial broilers) was 453 million birds, down slightly from last year.

The total value of all chickens in the U.S. on December 1, 2006 was \$1.18 billion, up 3 percent from December 1, 2005. The average value increased from \$2.52 per bird on December 1, 2005, to \$2.60 per bird on December 1, 2006.

COMING IN THE NEXT REPORTER

Sweet Cherries	Egg Production
Annual Red Meat Production	Monthly Red Meat Production
Potato Stocks	
Milk Production	
Cattle on Feed	

Peggy Stringer, Director
John Hilton, Deputy Director
Wendy Bruski, Statistical Info Assistant
10 W 15th Street, Helena, MT 59626
406-441-1240 or 1-800-835-2612
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